“Masters of Their Own Destiny”:
The Asians in the First World War and its Aftermath

An International Conference and a Photography Exhibition organized by
the History Department, Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University and
the Institute of Research on Contemporary Southeast Asia (IRASEC – CNRS)
9-10 November 2018

Organizers: Bhawan Ruangsilp (History Department, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand)
Claire Thi Liên Trần (Institute of Research on Contemporary Southeast Asia (IRASEC – CNRS, Bangkok)

Partners: Center of European Studies (CES), Chulalongkorn University, Mission Centenaire 1914-18, The Embassy of France, Bangkok, The Embassy of Germany, Bangkok, Alliance française, Etablissement de Communication et de Production Audiovisuelle de la Défense (ECPAD), Service Historique de la Défense, La Contemporaine, La Librairie du Siam; River Books

Friday, November 9

PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION (Venue: Ground Floor, Chamchuri 10 Bldg.)

08:00-08:30 Registration and coffee
08:30-10:00 Welcome speeches by representatives from Irasec and Chulalongkorn University, the Ambassadors of France and Germany and Mom Rajawongse Narisa Chakrabongse (River Books)

Opening Ceremony for Photography Exhibition

10:00 11:00 Keynote speaker Xu Guoqi, The University of Hong Kong

The Great War as Asia’s Shared history (45’) and Q/A (15’)

CONFERENCE (Venue: Chamchuri 10 Bldg.)

Topic 1: Asian Soldiers, Workers and Intelligentsia in Europe: Experiences of Mobility

11:00-12:30 Session 1: Asian soldiers on the European front

Salma Wasi (Jawaharlal Nehru Univ) Fuel and WWI: Cooking experience of Indian Troops
Satarupa Lahiri (Jawaharlal Nehru Univ) Between Fealty and Freedom: The Deserters of the Indian Army in WWI
Bhawan Ruangsilp (Chulalongkorn Univ) National Pride and Identity: Siamese Expeditionary Force in the Great War
14:00-15:50  **Session 2: Asian workers in Europe**

Mireille Le Van Ho (Honorary Chief Librarian, Paris) *The discovery of “a World of possibilities”: Daily life, hopes and disillusions of Vietnamese during WWI according to the Postal Censorship Service*

Olga V. Alexeeva (University of Quebec in Montreal), *War experiences of Chinese Labourers in Russia, 1914-1921: A Legacy of Pain and Pride*

Padej Kumlertsakul (The National archives UK) *Chinese labor corps in the Western Front*

Joy L.K. Pachuau (J Nehru Univ) *Notes from the Lushai Hills (Northeast India) The Great War and the Labour Corps*

Discussant Xu Guoqi (The University of Hong Kong) (30’)

15:50-16:20  **Coffee Break**

16:20-17:50  **Session 3: Asian leaders and diplomats**

Thep Boontanondha (Waseda University) *The First World war and the making of King Vajiravudh image as a Jomtub of the Nation*

Stefan Hell (independent scholar) *Adaptation and self-assertion: Prince Charoon and Thai-Western relations during and after World War I*

Jan Schmidt (KU Leuven), *A World War Closely Studied – Japanese Academics, Bureaucrats and Military Officers in Europe*

Discussant Wasana Wongsurawat (Chulalongkorn Univ) (30’)

**Saturday, November 10**

**Topic 2: Asian Individuals and the Circulation of New Ideas, Knowledge and Technics**

09:00-10:30  **Session 4: Asian activists and the making of new political networks**

Din Buadaeng (University Paris Diderot) *The Comrades of War Association: Political networks and the 1932 Siamese Revolution*

Radhika Singha (Jawaharlal Nehru Univ) *The shape of home-coming: Indian soldiers and labourers in global conflict, 1914-21*

Wasana Wongsurawat (Chulalongkorn Univ) *King Vajiravudh and The May Fourth Movement: resonance of Asian participation in the Great War*
Alexandre Barthel (Chulalongkorn Univ) *The First World War and the development of Chinese political activities in Siam*
Discussant Claire Tran (Irasec) (30’)

10:30-11:00 Coffee Break

11:00-12:30 **Session 5: The making of new Elite and the Emergence of new Professions**
Claire Tran (Irasec), *Nguyễn Xuân Mai, A Vietnamese medical doctor on the Front: Hopes of a volunteer and Disillusions of a veteran*
Boonpisit Srihong (Chulalongkorn Univ) *The Siamese Pilots of the Purple Jasmine Wing*
Discussant Bhawan Ruangsilp (Chulalongkorn Univ) (30’)

**Topic 3: Digital Ressources and Visual Sources First World War**
(Venue: Irasec - Alliance française Bangkok)

15 00 17:30 Oliver Janz (Freie Universität Berlin): *1914-1918-online. A Global Publication*

*Project in the Digital Age*

**Film Screening on the Siamese expeditionary force during the First Word War**
(ECPAD archives)
Debate with Denis Maréchal (Institut National d’Audiovisuel Ina, Paris) and Tul Israngura na Ayudhya (Chulalongkorn Univ)

Discussant: Claire Tran (Irasec)

17:30 –18:00 **Exhibition of the paintings of Erich Burnand** introduced by François Doré (Librairie du Siam)